

Exposing Your Expertise

By Philippa Gamse

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Writing and leveraging articles is my most successful strategy for promoting my Website and my speaking and consulting services. Visitors to your site from targeted articles tend to be higher quality leads than those from search engines, and potential buyers like to see that you're published in many credible outlets.

Here are my recommendations to implement this strategy:

1. Write the article

This may sound self-evident, but a couple of pointers:

a) Keep it short, and make the language simple, especially if you're targeting online outlets. People don't read word for word on the Web – rather, they'll scan the screen. Complex sentences and dense copy will lose readers fast.

b) Develop a template that can be easily customized for different target markets. My "Top Seven Ways to Tune Up your Website" has been parlayed into versions for over a dozen different industries. The essential points remain the same, and customizing simply involves adding specific examples.

2. Put it on your Website

One of the key goals of your Website should be to showcase your expertise. Content (combined with testimonials and success stories) is the best way to achieve this.

When adding articles to your site:

a) Include a clear reprint policy. This should state whether you allow articles to be reprinted, and if so, under what terms (including your byline, copyright, notification of use, etc.)

b) If you have a large number of articles, provide an index page that divides them into appropriate subject groupings, and gives a two-line description of each.

c) Create a byline with an enticing hook to get people to visit your Website. Mine refers to my popular free tipsheet "Beyond the Search Engines", which lists 23 alternative ways to promote your site. This is far more powerful than a bland statement such as "Philippa Gamse is an internationally recognized . . ."

3. Research and offer it to appropriate venues

It's critical to be very clear about your target audience, and how to reach them. Who are the economic buyers and decision makers that you'd like to be in front of, and what do they read? Do those sites or publications accept outside articles, and if so, what are their policies around doing so?

My assistant, Bonnie Jo Davis, runs my highly successful articles placement strategy. She provides a complete primer of her methodology, along with many online research sources at <http://www.ArticlesThatSell.com/>

4. Follow up links and references

It's extremely important to measure the success of these efforts, both in terms of the traffic to your site, and its quality.

Check the "referring URL" section in your traffic reports, and follow links to you from any site that you don't recognize. Often, site owners won't inform you when they've used your material. So you want to ensure that you have been properly attributed. But also, thank the site owner. I recently sent a note to a university professor who had added some of my articles to his course reading list. His response? "I really like your ideas, and by the way, we're looking for a speaker for our upcoming conference . . ."

The Proof of the Pudding . . .

Does all this work? Absolutely. One of my articles was recently highlighted as the "Cool Site of the Week" in Tekguide.net – an online technology and computer directory. But the page that it linked to was not mine, but PowerHomeBiz.com - another site that had featured this article. So I now have sites quoting sites that quote me . . . and that gets major brownie points in Google – the only remaining credible free search engine.

I was also recently hired to consult for a site in the auto industry after the owner had read my article in eDealershipnews.com. He said "I liked the article, I can see how you think, and I'd like some of that thinking for me". No further selling required!

Philippa Gamse, CyberSpeaker, is a Web strategy consultant and professional speaker. Check out her free tipsheet for 23 ideas to promote your Website: <http://www.CyberSpeaker.com/tipsheet.html>
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